

- (b) if so, the facts of the matter reported therein; and
- (c) the reaction of the Government there to?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRI YOGINDER K. ALAGH) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) According to Pentagon sources which is reported in the newspaper, the test involved disabling an old satellite which had been launched in may 1996 (now not in service) by aiming a high-power laser beam at it. The laser beam is transmitted from a remote army base in New Mexico.

The objective of the test, according to Pentagon, is not to destroy the satellite or result in any orbital debris, nor to pose any risk to other satellites but only to collect data to study how to protect US satellites against lasers.

(c) The test proposed cannot be considered as a violation of any international treaty to which India is a party. However, development in this area are monitored by the Government.

Clearance to Power Project

48. SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE : Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) the number of power plants received from Rajasthan are pending for clearance of the Central Electricity Authority (CEA);

(b) the estimated cost and capacity of each project; and

(c) the steps taken by the Government to provide clearance to those projects at the earliest?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRI JOGINDER K. ALAGH) : (a) The Detailed Project Report (DPR) submitted by M/s Hindustan Vidyut Corporation Limited to Central Electricity Authority (CEA) for implementing the Barsingsar Lignite Mining-cum-Power Generation Project (on the competitive bidding route) in Rajasthan has been considered for techno-economic appraisal by CEA.

(b) The Barsingsar Lignite Mining-cum-Power Generation Project has a proposed capacity of 500 MW and an estimated cost of Rs. 2468.23 crores.

(c) The project will be cleared as soon as the promoters are able to tie up pending inputs and requisite clearances from Central and State Government agencies.

[Translation]

Queen's Visit to India

49. SHRI RAMCHANDRA VEERAPPA :
SHRI K.P. SINGH DEO :

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Queen Elizabeth visited India recently; and

(b) if so the details of talks held between her and Indian leaders?

THE PRIME MINISTER (SHRI I.K. GUJRAL) : (a) and (b) Queen Elizabeth II paid a State Visit to India from October 12-18, 1997. This was goodwill visit and the talks covered in a general manner, bilateral relations with the U.K., as well as other subjects of mutual concern.

[English]

Non-Aligned Movement

50. SHRI SANDIPAN THORAT : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have taken fresh initiatives for identifying the specific areas for revitalising the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM);

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith response of the other member countries of NAM to the initiatives taken by India; and

(c) the details of action plan finalised/proposed for 1997-98 for vitalisation of NAM?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI SALEEM IQBAL SHERVANI): (a) to (c) India has been actively constructively participating in different NAM forums with a view to strengthen and revitalise the Movement. India has taken a number of initiatives to identify specific areas for action in this regard. India hosted the 12th NAM Ministerial Conference in April, 1997 in New Delhi. At this conference, Ministers of Non-Aligned countries concluded that the Movement should enhance its unity and cohesion and co-ordinate positions of member countries towards major international issues with the a view to strengthening their negotiating power. They reiterated that it was essential to widen the scope of agreement, expand the area of action, set clearer criteria and procedures, and develop the principles of solidarity among the members of the Movement. The Ministers directed the Movement to promote jointly its collective positions on international peace and security, UN reforms,

disarmament, development, human right, racial discrimination, terrorism, the environment and other political issues in the UN and international arena.

It was India's endeavour during this Conference to give NAM a modern and forward looking orientation in procedure as well as substance. Our attempt was to make the results action oriented and move away from rhetoric. Apart from the traditional areas of NAM interaction, the Conference also focussed on social areas where South-South interaction has been minimal.

Following another initiative at the conference to further enhance South-South Co-operation in the area of international trade and economic issues, NAM has recently set up a group of eminent economists to study the challenges facing developing countries and make recommendations thereon.

The Delhi Conference decided to hold the next NAM Summit in South Africa in 1998. This is expected to further enhance the strength and prestige of the Movement. India would participate actively in preparations for the summit.

B.D.S. Degrees

51. SHRI SHANTILAL PARSOTAMDAS PATEL:
SHRI RADHA MOHAN SINGH:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether BDS degrees of Kolhapur, Pune and Amaravati are being treated as unrecognised for two years or so by many State Governments and Dental Council of India;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the said degrees have, of late, been recognised; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY) : (a) to (d) As per Section 10 (2) of the Dentists Act 1948 any authority or institution in India which grants a dental qualification not included in Part I of the Schedule may apply to the Central Government to have such qualification recognised and included in that Part, and the central Government after consulting the Dental Council of India, and after such inquiry, if any, as it may think fit for the purpose, may, by notification in the Official Gazette, amend Part I of the Schedule so as to include such qualification therein, and any such notification may also direct that an entry shall be made in Part I of the Schedule

against such dental qualification declaring that it shall be a recognised dental qualification only when granted after a specified date. The matters relating to recognition of BDS degrees of Shivaji University Kolhapur, Pune University and Amaravati University are under active consideration.

Cogentrix

52. SHRI V. DHANANJAYA KUMAR : Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have given clearance to the Mangalore Power Company (Cogentrix) to set up a 1000 M.W. Power Plant at Nandikur, Udupi District;

(b) whether some conditions have been imposed by the Karnataka High Court for setting up of the Power Plant;

(c) if so, whether all conditions are to be fulfilled before granting final clearance;

(d) whether environmental safety measures have been taken into consideration to prevent pollution of air, water and space;

(e) whether the Finance Ministry is having reservation in granting investment clearance to the company; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRI YOGINDER K. ALAGH) : (a) The 1000 MW Mangalore Power Project proposed to be set up by M/s Mangalore Power Company has been accorded techno-economic clearance by the Central Electricity Authority.

(b) to (d) The project has obtained the no-objection from the Karnataka State Pollution Control Board and environmental clearance from the Ministry of Environment & Forests (Government of India), both subject to fulfilment of certain conditions. Writ Petitions Nos. 790 of 1997 and 28651 of 1996 were filed in the High Court of Karnataka, which, inter-alia, questioned the environmental clearance given to the project. The Hon'ble Court, in its judgment delivered on 29th August, 1997 has not imposed any conditions for setting up of the Mangalore Power Project. However, the Court has directed the Central Government to take into consideration the reports/views of certain agencies/persons and also to take note of criticism of absence of the carrying capacity study and its impact to ascertain whether such information is such that the action taken by the Mangalore Power Company will affect the quality of human life and environment in a significant manner or extent which has not already been considered by them and decide the issues arising therein.